

MINUTES

MONTANA SENATE 57th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION COMMITTEE ON STATE ADMINISTRATION

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN DON HARGROVE**, on March 20, 2001 at 10:00 A.M., in Room 335 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. Don Hargrove, Chairman (R)
Sen. John C. Bohlinger, Vice Chairman (R)
Sen. Edward Butcher (R)
Sen. Pete Ekegren (R)
Sen. Jim Elliott (D)
Sen. Ken Toole (D)

Members Excused: Sen. Eve Franklin (D)
Sen. Fred Thomas (R)

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Lynette Brown, Committee Secretary
David Niss, Legislative Branch

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing(s) & Date(s) Posted:
Executive Action: HB 612

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EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 612

David Niss explained to the committee the motion on March 16, 2001 was to reconsider the segregation of paragraphs two, three, and eight of **amendment HB0061202.adn**. He told the committee those three paragraphs were tied together with the substance being contained in paragraph eight. **Mr. Niss** said Subsection 4

in paragraph 8 would require the election administrator to investigate further.

SEN. ED BUTCHER told the committee everybody talked about voter reform, but nobody does anything about it. He added it was the job of the election official to verify the signatures.

SEN. JOHN BOHLINGER stated he had agreed with **SEN. BUTCHER's** amendment at first, but following a conversation with **Duane Winslow**, from Yellowstone County, he had changed his opinion of the amendment. **SEN. BOHLINGER** told the committee **Duane Winslow** expressed two concerns about the amendment: (1) the petition address did not contain the same legal weight as the voter registration cards, and (2) the time and money involved to comply with this requirement. **Mr. Winslow** also told **Sen. BOHLINGER** he thought this amendment was unnecessary.

SEN. KEN TOOLE said he had visited with the Clerks and Records office and they felt this would trigger a requirement at a time the office was very busy, they would lose some flexibility, and also had a time concern.

SEN. BUTCHER told the committee he was concerned with votes being thrown out. It would be more difficult to gather signatures without this amendment. **SEN. BUTCHER** added his primary concern was signatures being thrown out for petitions.

SEN. BOHLINGER stated that **Duane Winslow** had stated if a person signed a petition and lived at a different address, the signature was not thrown out. Therefore, because of the high cost involved and the limited amount of good resulting from the amendment, he urged the committee to not pass the amendment.

SEN. TOOLE told the committee that when voting in Helena, the election officials always asked if the address was correct.

SEN. BUTCHER asked **Elaine Gravely** if they could instruct the election officials to ask for verification of the address upon voting when they conduct the training seminars. **Ms. Gravely** answered they could instruct the people to follow that guideline, but could not enforce it.

Motion/Vote: **SEN. BUTCHER** moved that **PARAGRAPHS 2, 3, AND 8 OF AMENDMENT HB0061202.ADN BE TABLED. Motion carried unanimously.**

SEN. BOHLINGER told the committee he wanted to reconsider **HB0061201.adn**. He stated a concern that asking for a person's telephone number might discourage people from voting.

SEN. TOOLE replied that he had wanted the telephone number included to ensure that any one of the three options could be used for verification purposes: (1) mailing address, (2) post office address, and (3) telephone number.

SEN. PETE EKEGREN stated there was nothing intrusive about a telephone number.

SEN. DON HARGROVE added it was perhaps more of a perception.

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SEN. TOOLE said he had been detecting a trend going toward using residential addresses for verification.

SEN. BUTCHER said he agreed with **SEN. TOOLE**.

The committee agreed not to reconsider **amendment HB0061201.adn.** as suggested by **SEN. BOHLINGER**.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 10:30 A.M.

SEN. DON HARGROVE, Chairman

LYNETTE BROWN, Secretary

DH/LB

EXHIBIT (sts63aad)